

Environmental Justice Fact Sheet **State and Tribal Environmental Justice (STEJ) Grants Program**

OVERVIEW. EPA's State and Tribal Environmental Justice (STEJ) Grants Program seeks to help States and Tribes effectively provide for environmental justice in the development and implementation of their environmental programs. For fiscal year 1998, EPA awarded five grants, at \$100,000 each, to (4) States and (1) Tribe. For FY 1999, EPA awarded another five grants, at \$100,000 each, to (4) States and (1) Tribe. For FY 2000, the STEJ Program is not funded but instead will be evaluated for its effectiveness.

The specific goals and objectives of the STEJ Grants Program are as follows: 1) Reduce or prevent disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income communities and minority communities, 2) Integrate environmental justice goals into a state's or tribe's policies, programs and activities, 3) Provide financial and technical resources to develop an enabling infrastructure at the state/local community level and tribal/tribal community level, 4) Set up model programs to address enforcement and compliance issues in affected EJ communities, 5) Integrate measurable EJ goals within the annual Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) and Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs) between a state and EPA, or integrate measurable EJ goals within the Tribal Environmental Agreements (TEAs), and 6) Improve public participation in the decision-making processes (e.g. permitting processes, development of regulations and policies).

ELIGIBILITY. Participation is limited to State or Tribal Government environmental/natural resource agencies. Applications will serve as the sole source for evaluation. A panel of knowledgeable representatives reviews and evaluates each application.

FY 1998 STATE AND TRIBAL EJ GRANTS AWARDED

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC) - \$100,000

This project will work to achieve both compliance with environmental standards and remediation of adverse environmental conditions at mobile home parks while meeting the affordable housing needs of thousands of low-income Vermonters. The two specific goals of the project are: 1) Obtain compliance and reduce or prevent disproportionate adverse environmental and health effects on mobile home park residents, and 2) Develop enabling infrastructure at the state and local level with technical and legal resources available to assist mobile home park residents. This project seeks to address the unique environmental and public health concerns which impact mobile home park residence. Five state agencies have formed a mobile home park compliance group to share information, expertise, and authority to develop and implement solutions for mobile home park problems that previously seemed unsolvable from an individual agency perspective. The greatest need remains to be the implementation of technically practicable as well as cost-effective solutions to sewage disposal problems and water supply problems which plague many mobile home parks.

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection - Environmental Equity Community Partnership Program (EECP) - \$100,000

The purpose of this project is to allow the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish and incorporate an "Environmental Justice (EJ) Screening Process" for evaluating EJ issues of affected communities with respect to Air, Water, and/or Federal Hazardous Waste facility permits. Based upon the results from the EJ Screening Process, the DEP would establish an Environmental Equity Community Partnership (EECP) Program in those minority and/or low-income communities that may be experiencing a cumulative environmental burden .

State of Tennessee Environmental Policy Office - Development of a Strategic Plan to Ensure Environmental Justice - \$100,000

The State will create a strategic plan with significant community involvement that will guide all environmental justice activities of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and serve as a state and national model. The grantee will address environmental justice through three major components: 1) Achieving an integrated system of meaningful community involvement and participation through networks, such as Tennessee' regional Minority Health Coalitions and other organizations, 2) Integrating environmental justice strategies with a major ongoing initiative to re-engineer the Department's environmental regulatory programs (see Appendix A), and 3) Developing and strengthening partnerships with other state and federal agencies.

Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) - To Enhance the TNRCC's Effectiveness in Complying with Title VI - \$100,000

This project seeks to further TNRCC's compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, through the creation and guidance of stakeholder advisory panel. The project goals were developed with input from various communities that have filed Title VI complaints against the TNRCC or which have raised issues of environmental justice with the agency in order to determine the best course of action to reduce the possibility for future complaints. The advisory panel, made up of the partnering community representatives from Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Houston, and Wichita Falls--along with the TNRCC Chairman or his appointee, Public Interest Counsel, Office of Legal Services--Supplemental Environmental Projects, and a representative from a Regional Field Office, will help develop model programs to be piloted in their respective areas to address enforcement and compliance concerns. Furthermore, the panel will provide vital input to enhance the agency's environmental equity efforts.

Kalispel Tribe of Indians - Environmental Justice Program Grant for Kalispel Tribe of Indians - \$100,000

The Kalispel Tribe proposes to develop and implement an ISO 14001 conforming Environmental Management System (EMS) that integrates EJ goals with environmental performance objectives for the Kalispel reservation. The Kalispel Tribe developed the proposal with the support and advice of

grassroots organizations, the Director of the Washington Department of Ecology and his staff, Pend Oreille County, and the Coeur D'Alene, Colville and Spokane Tribes. The ISO 14001 standard, establishes an internationally accepted framework for EMSs which can serve as a sustainable program that: 1) allow meaningful involvement of all members of the Tribe in the development of goals for an environmental program, 2) prevents impacts from being disproportionately borne by subgroups within the Tribe, 3) goes above and beyond compliance with environmental laws, 4) reduces pollution and pro-actively prevents pollution, and 5) ensures fair treatment.

FY 1999 STATE AND TRIBAL EJ GRANTS AWARDED

State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP) - "Model Multi-Cultural Public Participation Plan" - \$100,000

This project will result in the development of a model multi-cultural public participation plan to enhance the State of Connecticut's existing Environmental Equity Program. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP) will create and work with a review team that will be comprised of state agency representatives and community-based grantee organizations, to be selected through a competitive process. The competitive process will result in the awarding of five grants to eligible community-based organizations, which will then become the review team. CTDEP will conduct training workshops with local zoning and planning officials, CTDEP staff, and the review team to: (1) familiarize the community-based organizations about the existing siting, public notification, and public participation procedures, and (2) engage in facilitated discussions of specific notification and informational needs within their communities. Through the review team's analysis of the State's existing public notification and participation process, the State will develop a report and make recommendations on how to implement a program to increase public notice and participation among low-income and minority communities. The end product will be a model statewide public participation plan designed to improve public participation and to prevent discriminatory effects from Connecticut's permitting and other regulatory processes. The Connecticut model will be made available for distribution to other communities throughout the country.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) - Environmental Justice Grant Project - \$100,000

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) project will accomplish the following five (5) objectives: 1) formation of a multi-stakeholder Environmental Justice Advisory Group that would report to the Commissioner; 2) development of an environmental justice (EJ) permit policy that would articulate guidelines for addressing EJ issues which arise in permitting; 3)

the enhancement of the Department's website that would enable the State to provide better and more timely information to the public, such as receipt of permit applications, among other things; 4) conducting a series of legislative hearings throughout the State (to identify environmental justice concerns, enhance public participation in development and implementation of the State's EJ program, encourage communities in planning for environmental and economic enhancement, and integrate EJ concerns into local land use planning, and related State and local activities); and 5) development of recommendations, by the Advisory Group, for a Strategic EJ plan for the Department and the State of New York.

Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) - Environmental Justice Strategy - \$100,000

The main goal of the project is for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to "work directly and in partnership with Indiana communities to develop an environmental justice (EJ) strategy...to integrate EJ goals into the Department's policies, programs and activities." The program is to be based on the following principles: (1) awareness & sensitivity; (2) public participation; (3) inclusiveness; (4) pro-activity; and (5) sustainability. Through this project, IDEM will do the following: 1) Form a diverse EJ Advisory Committee which will develop the EJ Strategic Plan; 2) Map concentrations of low income/minority populations and environmental impacts; 3) Educate communities about environmental issues and how they can get involved; 4) Develop a training program to train IDEM staff on environmental justice issues and how they can be more responsive to environmental justice concerns; 5) Include the implementation of the Strategic Plan into the Performance Partnership Agreement; 6) Establish a single point of contact within IDEM to respond to EJ concerns; 7) Develop a protocol for facilitation of environmental disputes so that disputes can be resolved prior to decision making; 8) Evaluate, with community input, existing IDEM decision making processes regarding rule making & permitting, enhancing public participation opportunities, and the way in which IDEM communicates with the public; 9) Prepare a written commitment by the IDEM to implement the Strategy, including a time-line for implementation; and 10) Evaluate whether the Strategy is being implemented within IDEM and how well it is being implemented.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) - Strategic Framework & Incorporation of Environmental Justice - \$100,000

The purpose of this project is to develop and implement Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) program to work directly with communities to improve consideration of environmental justice (EJ) concerns and compliance with Title VI in the State's environmental programs. Specifically, MPCA is to: 1) Form an advisory task force to consist of representatives from multiple organizations representing minority communities where most environmental injustices are found, members of community-based groups, and representatives from academia, the medical profession, other government agencies, and the regulated community; 2) Develop and disseminate environmental, geographic and demographic data to support outreach efforts and environmental program implementation; and 3) Develop and implement a plan to integrate environmental justice considerations into MPCA's decision-making and communication strategies. MPCA is also planning to initiate a network of other state agencies to collaborate and address environmental justice issues.

Manilaq Association (11 Tribes of Northwest Arctic Region) - Environmental Justice Project - \$100,000

This project will identify, investigate, and document the environmental burdens placed on the Native people of the Alaska region. In addition, through the education of regional village representatives on how environmental justice issues are relevant to tribal concerns, this project will serve to evaluate the environmental injustices experienced by the Native people of the Northwest Arctic over the last few decades and to inform tribes on the importance of implementing EJ in tribal activities. An environmental justice (EJ) guide will be developed and shared with the tribes of the Association. The document will serve as a tool to be used by tribes for evaluating environmental violations and as an EJ outreach educational tool. The guide will also be available to private, state and federal agencies as a reference to examine their compliance with environmental mandates.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
1-800-962-6215**